

# Grants to Organizations

The National Endowment for the Arts offers assistance to a wide range of nonprofit organizations to support their arts programming. These Grants to Organizations account for more than 45 percent of the Endowment's annual budget. The NEA funds exemplary projects in all artistic disciplines, including dance, design, folk and traditional arts, literature, media arts, music, musical theater, opera, theater, and visual arts in addition to supporting arts education, museums, and multidisciplinary projects. All grants must be matched at least equally by non-federal sources of funds. Multistate grants are those that are awarded to projects that tour or are distributed across state lines, broadening the impact of federal investment.

Panels made up of private citizens review grant applications and recommend proposals for funding. NEA staff selects artists, arts administrators, arts patrons, and at least one layperson not employed in the arts to serve on each panel, ensuring diverse aesthetic, cultural, ethnic, and geographic perspectives. To avoid conflicts of interest, panelists do not consider applications from organizations with which they are affiliated. Panel recommendations for funding are forwarded to the National Council on the Arts for further review. Applications approved by the Council are then forwarded to the Chairman, who has final authority on all funding decisions.

The following pages contain examples of some of the projects that the NEA supported during FY 2000. Complete listings of FY 2000 grants and panelists are posted on the Endowment's Web site at [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov).

**FISCAL YEAR 2000  
FACTS AND FIGURES  
Grants to Organizations**

**Number of Grant  
Applications Received:  
2,599**

**Number of Grants  
Awarded: 1,487**

**Dollar Amount of Grants  
Awarded: \$36,573,121**

Grant Category	APPLICATIONS		GRANTS		MULTISTATE GRANTS	
	Number Received	Amount Requested	Number Awarded	Amount Awarded	Number Awarded	Amount Awarded
Creation & Presentation	1,183	\$73,128,978	708	\$16,855,670	187	\$5,404,400
Access	400	\$25,497,361	209	\$4,462,500	61	\$1,491,500
Education	543	\$35,967,500	247	\$6,274,250	45	\$1,370,250
Heritage & Preservation	368	\$20,034,369	207	\$3,743,172	71	\$1,500,050
Planning & Stabilization	105	\$7,748,243	72	\$2,237,529	34	\$1,258,000
Arts on Radio and Television	*	*	44	\$3,000,000	44	\$3,000,000

\*Applications received and amount requested for Arts on Radio and Television grants were included in Creation & Presentation, Access, and Heritage & Preservation totals.

## CREATION & PRESENTATION

The NEA's Creation & Presentation grants support the broad spectrum of American creativity, assisting in the creation of artistic works and encouraging the public presentation of art forms from all cultures and time periods. Creation & Presentation is by far the largest of the Grants to Organization categories, awarding 708 grants in FY 2000 across all 50 states as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Of these, 50 were awarded in states previously underrepresented by direct NEA grants.

### *Cleveland Orchestra Examines the Influence of 20th Century String Compositions*

At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Cleveland Orchestra and its music director, Christoph von Dohnányi, examined how the 20<sup>th</sup> century influenced compositions for string instruments, focusing on the continuing evolution of new string performance techniques. The Bridging the Century project, supported by an NEA Creation & Presentation grant, consisted of eight programs featuring works by composers Dmitri Shostakovich, Edward Elgar, Alban Berg, Leonard Bernstein, Sergei Prokofiev, and Samuel Adler, as well as a rare performance of Béla Bartók's revolutionary *Music for Strings, Percussion, and Celesta*. An internationally renowned collection of guest conductors and musicians contributed their talents to the project, including violinists Gil Shaham and William Preucil and cellists Truls Mørk and Stephen Geber. In addition, to highlight the continued importance of string instruments in the new millennium, the Orchestra commissioned Jeffrey Rathbun to compose a work featuring its cello section. The Orchestra performed the world premiere of the work, entitled *Motions for Cellos*, to glowing reviews. More than 40,000 people attended the 25 performances, which ran from December 1999 through November 2000.



Bridging the Century activities went beyond the actual concerts. To engage the community in the importance of the music, the project included open rehearsals, pre-concert discussions, master classes, and a composer-soloist panel. In addition, the Orchestra's adult education programs and "Scholars on the Circle," a six-week continuing education course, incorporated discussions about 20<sup>th</sup> century string repertoire and the featured works into the curriculum. All performances were broadcast locally, reaching approximately 120,000 regional listeners. The joy of this music was shared by people outside the Cleveland area as well: the works by Rathbun, Bartók, and Berg were broadcast nationally on public and commercial radio, and were projected to reach more than 2 million people across the country.

**Musical director Christoph von Dohnányi conducting the Cleveland Orchestra in Rathbun's *Motions for Cellos*. (Photo by Roger Mastroianni)**

## *Mark Taper Forum Produces Year-Long Salute to the Millennium*

The Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, with support from an NEA Creation & Presentation grant, developed the Millennium Project, designed to create a meaningful theatrical response to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the start of the 21<sup>st</sup>. Rather than celebrate the year 2000 with a one-time festival or retrospective, the Mark Taper Forum used the occasion to create a new annual series of plays, "Taper, Too," which reaches an expanded audience by developing artists whose unique perspectives reflect the diversity of Los Angeles' communities. In its first year, the Millennium Project presented a series of four new plays from three of the Taper's playwright development laboratories—the Asian Theatre Workshop, Latino Theatre Initiative, and Other Voices Project.

One of the new plays produced as part of the Millennium Project was *Weights* by playwright Lynn Manning. Manning was a visual artist until age 23, when he was shot and blinded by an unknown assailant. Since then, Manning has turned to writing as a way of expressing his art and exploring his disability. Manning used *Weights* to examine his physical loss and the many ways his identity have evolved since the gunshot blinded him. Presented as a one-man show, Manning traced his life from an impoverished childhood through his blinding to the present, without resorting to pity or bitterness, and demonstrated the power of art in overcoming adversity. The Taper, with the assistance of the Braille Institute and League for the Junior Blind, provided Braille programs and live audio descriptions to blind and visually impaired theater-goers who attended the play.

**Lynn Manning in Mark Taper Forum's production of *Weights*, written and performed by Manning and directed by Robert Egan. (Photo by Craig Schwartz)**



***JAZZDANCE Celebrates the  
Hundredth Birthday of American  
Composer Copland***

Marking the centennial celebration of the birth of American composer Aaron Copland, choreographer Danny Buraczeski created his first full-length work for his Minneapolis, Minnesota-based dance company JAZZDANCE with the support of an NEA Creation & Presentation grant. The hour-long dance work, entitled *Copland: Music and Imagination*, was a collage of movement and music in ten parts, each part flowing into the next without pause. The work started with an excerpt from one of Copland's most well known works, *Billy the Kid*, and proceeded to more unfamiliar territory, including excerpts from his *Four Piano Blues*, *Clarinet Concerto*, and *Duet for Violin and Piano*. Copland's 1940 piece, *Quiet City*, was presented in its entirety. By choosing a variety of Copland's works, many obscure or unknown to the general public, Buraczeski effectively demonstrated the breadth of Copland's music.

Buraczeski captured the spirit of America that infiltrates Copland's music with a sense of joy and optimism in his choreography. For example, the wide open country feeling that one gets from Copland's use of folk music motifs in his ballet *Billy the Kid* is replicated by Buraczeski's pantomime of a cowboy examining the big sky of the West. Buraczeski's choice of interpretative rather than programmatic dance steps for the Copland pieces allows the dancers the opportunity to highlight the mood and spirit of the music. The eight performances of the work drew more than 1,000 people, presenting a different view of Copland's music through the prism of JAZZDANCE's intricate performances.



**JAZZDANCE's production of  
*Copland: Music and Imagination*, a dance work by  
Danny Buraczeski, celebrated the centennial  
birthday of composer  
Aaron Copland. (Photo by  
Erik Saulitis)**

## *The Power of Poetry Is Brought to Rural North Carolina*

Luis Rodriguez believes in the power of poetry. Poetry helped him escape the gang life he was a part of while growing up in South Central Los Angeles, as documented in his memoir *Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.* His belief that poetry could change lives led him to start “Youth Struggling for Survival,” a movement that strives to turn young people away from violence and help them find meaning in life. The North Carolina Literary Consortium (NCLC) chose to bring the passion, expertise, and experience of Luis Rodriguez to North Carolina for 10 one-week residencies in 2000 as part of Word Wide: Writers of the Americas. Word Wide, supported in part by an NEA Creation & Presentation grant and the North Carolina Arts Council, included readings and discussions, hands-on class sessions, and workshops at such diverse locations as public libraries, schools and colleges, homes for battered women and at-risk children, and correctional facilities. NCLC estimates that nearly 8,000 persons, more than half of them under 18 years of age, attended Rodriguez’s sessions, and another 20,000 were reached through radio and television broadcasts.

By focusing on Latin American poetry and literature, Word Wide broadened local communities’ understanding of the diverse cultures in their midst. In addition, Rodriguez’ success as a writer encouraged aspiring writers in all the areas he visited, often helping them to see how they can use art to better understand themselves and their environments. Rodriguez never shied away from his violent past during his



**Poet Luis Rodriguez.**  
(Photo courtesy of the North Carolina Arts Council)

presentations, instead using his experience to demonstrate how poetry had helped him turn his life around. Not poetry alone however; Rodriguez also emphasized the importance of family and culture in making a community strong and its members successful. With an ever-growing Hispanic population in North Carolina—jumping by 100 percent from 1990 to 1998—Rodriguez presented a new awareness of this ethnic group, both to people who still see Latin American populations as “the other” and to the Hispanic community itself.

“The greatest accomplishment of this program in our area was the number of people who were reached and excited by Luis’s basic message—that writing and creativity can truly save a life,” said site coordinator Susan Winberg in Boone, North Carolina. “In addition, I think a number of people in our fairly isolated mountain area became much more aware of the Chicano/Latino culture and of educational and equity issues in society as a whole.”

## *Philip Glass Makes Opera out of Kafka's In the Penal Colony*

Commissioned by A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle, Washington and supported by an NEA Creation & Presentation grant, preeminent composer Philip Glass turned to one of the century's most highly regarded writers, Franz Kafka. Taking one of Kafka's darkest and most disturbing tales, *In the Penal Colony*, as his source material, Glass collaborated with noted librettist Rudolph Wurlitzer to create what he refers to as a 'pocket opera'—more compact than a typical opera, with a smaller cast and shorter length. In addition, it can travel more easily, and after its debut in Seattle, the show has traveled across the country.

Since his breakthrough theatrical pieces—*Einstein on the Beach*, created in 1976 in collaboration with Robert Wilson, and *Satyagraha* in collaboration with Constance DeJong in 1980—Glass has acquired a reputation as one of the country's leading contemporary composers, with more than 15 scores, as well as symphonies, string quartets, and pop recordings, to his name.

For *In the Penal Colony*, Glass used the two main characters of the story—a foreign visitor who has come to witness an execution and an officer attempting to maintain the brutal traditions of a former commander—as the principal singers in the piece. Most of the action and dialogue revolve around an execution machine, which gruesomely tortures the victims before killing them. In an unusual twist, Kafka himself was one of the characters in the opera, writing furiously and commenting on the action on-stage. The dialogue for the Kafka character was taken from his journals and letters by the direc-

tor, longtime Glass collaborator, JoAnne Akalaitis. Glass's score, written for a string quartet plus double bass, used his familiar driving, hypnotic features to good effect, resembling the sound of a relentless machine.

The opera met great success as it traveled throughout the country. *The Seattle Weekly* commented that "Glass' great strength as an opera composer is his skill in text setting. Not a syllable was unclear, with the naturalistic speech rhythms of the vocal lines bouncing off the neutral, chugging accompaniment." *The New York Times* stated that "Mr. Glass's signature technique of ravishment by repetition lends itself well to the story's dreamlike state of unbroke-  
n suspense."

**The Officer (Herbert Perry) with the execution machine during A Contemporary Theatre's world premiere production of *In the Penal Colony*, a new theater work by Philip Glass. (Photo by Chris Bennion)**



## EDUCATION

In FY 2000, the previously single Education and Access category was split into separate budget allocations. For Education, organizations applying proposed projects beyond the one-time, lecture/demonstration model of teaching. Many applications proposed long-term residency programs, providing significant engagement for young people with professional artists. Other applications proposed programs forwarding the process of lifelong learning, teaching audiences of all ages about artistic traditions.

More than 500 applications were reviewed in FY 2000 for Education grants, and 247 were awarded in 42 states, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. Twenty-nine of the projects focus solely on K-12 curriculum-based activities.

### *Northwest Film Center Teaches the Teachers in the Media Arts*

The Portland Art Museum's Northwest Film Center is a regional media arts resource and service organization based in Portland, Oregon. To encourage the study and appreciation of the media arts, the Center provides not only exhibitions of quality work in film and video, but also educational and informational programs to residents in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska. One of those programs, supported by an NEA Education grant, is the Media Arts Academy for Teachers. The Academy is an annual six-day professional development institute devoted to supporting educators interested in using the media arts in the classroom. Teachers, guidance counselors, and school adminis-

trators throughout the region who want to emphasize media arts and media literacy to their students attend the sessions, which combine theory and practice on subjects such as integrating media arts with other academic subjects, applying media literacy concepts, and gaining confidence in media technologies and processes.

Understanding the media and new technologies is especially important nowadays since much of the information youth receive, and entertainment they enjoy, is through television, film, and the Internet. This involves not only understanding and interpreting images that youth encounter through electronic media, but also engaging them in the process of creating their own media-based products to communicate their ideas. The Media Arts Academy helps teachers better educate youth in the media arts, giving them a vocabulary to discuss and evaluate the media and the knowledge and means to create their own works.

**Oregon teachers participating in the Northwest Film Center's annual Media Arts Academy for Teachers in Portland, Oregon practice videography skills as part of a six-day immersion into the world of independent filmmaking for educators. (Photo by Beth Nicewonger)**



## *Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra Integrates the Arts with School Curriculum*

Since 1996, the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra has received NEA Education grants to support its Arts in Community Education (ACE) program, which brings musicians and other artists into the local schools to not only teach the arts, but to show how they can be integrated with other subject areas. ACE focuses not just on elementary-level but also on middle-school-level students, beginning with kindergarten and following students sequentially through eighth grade, integrating music study with math, science, and the language arts. For instance, ACE's fifth-grade curriculum combines music with science, with activities including using musical instruments to demonstrate harmony and pitch, and using singing to discuss how we hear and how we produce sound. The ACE program is currently in 24 public and private schools in eight school districts in the greater Milwaukee area, with more than 8,000 students, their parents, and 500 teachers participating.

With the FY 2000 NEA Education grant, the Orchestra is undertaking a comprehensive case study of the ACE program to identify ways in which the program can be replicated in other communities. The Orchestra's program has long attracted national attention, including a segment on *CBS Sunday Morning*, for its integration of the arts into the school curriculum and



its strong partnership with the Milwaukee school system, both unique among arts education programs of arts organizations. Data compiled by the Orchestra suggest that ACE is having a significant impact on the educational lives of both the children and the teachers, including increased inter- and intrapersonal skills, increased conceptual understanding, and improved communication skills. The case study will help the Orchestra better understand why these outcomes occur, and what aspects of the program lead to success. The study is being conducted during the 2000–2001 school year. Once the research is completed, the findings will be disseminated nationally.

**The Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra's Principal Tuba Alan Baer uses his garden hose to impress Parkway Elementary School (Glendale, Wisconsin) kindergartners with how far his brass instrument's tubing would reach if uncoiled as part of the Orchestra's Arts in Community Education program. (Photo by B. Artin Haig)**

## *Elders Share the Arts Provides Training to Create Arts Programs for the Elderly*

**A participant at Elders Share the Arts' Center for Creative Aging learns about creating a "Memory Box," one of the many creative arts approaches taught at the Center. (Photo by Terry Scott)**

It is irrefutable that America's population is aging. By the year 2030, 28 percent of the population is expected to be over 60 years old, and the number of those over 85 will have tripled. With Americans living longer than ever before, there will be nearly twice as many older adults in 2030 than there are today. Elders Share the Arts (ESTA), a nationally recognized community arts organization located in Brooklyn, New York, draws on the wealth of resources in this growing population to help elderly persons share their stories and arts with the younger generations. The staff of professional artists works with elders and youth to create inter-generational arts programming, transforming life stories into dramatic, literary, and visual presentations. Elderly individuals learn new skills, share their wisdom, and encounter personal growth, helping to reduce the sense of loss and isolation that older adults sometimes experience.

To assist other organizations that wish to create similar types of programming, ESTA created a national training program, the Center for Creative Aging, through a partnership with the American Society on Aging's National Learning Center. The Center for Creative Aging, supported by an NEA Education grant, provides training for professionals in gerontology, education, and the arts in the skills required to create oral history and arts programs for seniors as well as for youth. The training provides participants with theoretical and practical professional development that will assist in creating inter-generational arts education programs and building community arts partnerships. Centers have been piloted in New York, San Francisco, and Philadelphia and are planned for Boston and Miami.



## ACCESS

The NEA's Access grants perform a vital community service by taking the arts to people and places where few opportunities exist. Disseminating the arts is accomplished in several ways: through regional touring of performances or exhibitions, radio and television broadcasts, publication of books and magazines, and distribution on the Internet. Of the 400 Access applications received, 209 were awarded grants in 43 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Sixty-one of these grants were multistate.

### *Visual Artists Take A Community-Based Approach in Delaware*

Since 1992, the Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts (DCCA) has provided visual artists' residencies to infuse innovative, challenging art into the local region. The artist-in-residence works with a community group on a collaborative project designed to actively involve the participants in a thought-provoking, art-making process.

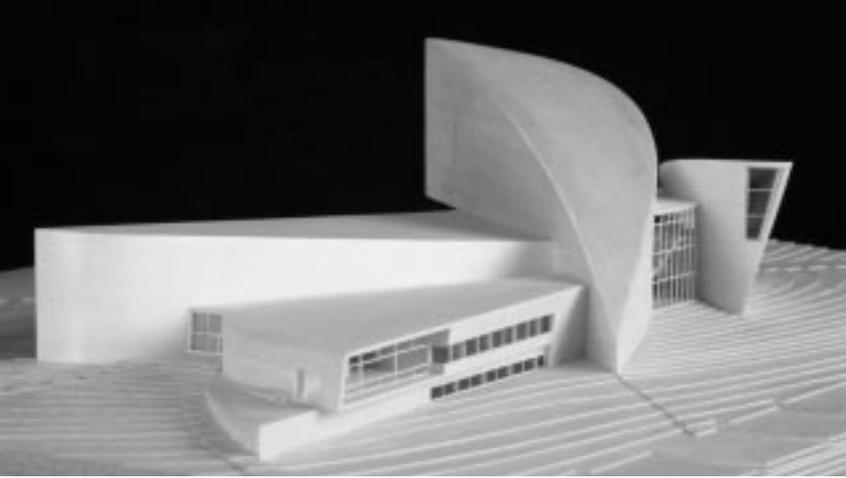
Supported by an NEA Access grant, DCCA is bringing four artists to Wilmington to work with the city's underserved populations. Two of the residencies were completed in 2000 and two will be completed in 2001. Benjamin Schulman, an installation artist working with found and recycled objects, worked with youth in the Boys and Girls Club on a site-specific installation that incorporated materials from the local urban landscape. Schulman led the group in an exploration of the history of the shipbuilding industry in Wilmington and the relationship it has to the formation of the city's neighborhoods. The youth then worked with the artist to create ceramic boats and a sail-shaped quilt with imagery that related to the theme of home and neighborhood. Visual artist Kim Mayhorn worked with youth from the Christina Cultural Arts Center, an African American cultural center, using mixed media to create an installation reflecting the diversity and history of the African American community.



In 2001, Maria-Theresa Fernandes will collaborate with the Indo-American community in Wilmington on a project exploring cultural identity through handmade paper production and bookmaking. Brian Moss' project will include a photography class in hand-made cameras in which the participants, cancer patients from the Wellness Community Center, will take a series of portraits and self-portraits to examine issues such as self-image, loss, memory, interaction, and self-expression.

A catalogue will be published documenting all residencies, including samples of the artwork, essays and interviews regarding the residencies, statements by the artists, biographical information about the artists, and responses of the community and participants to the projects.

**A young participant from the Clarence Fraim Branch of the Boys and Girls Club of Delaware sculpts a clay boat as part of the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Art's residency project with artist Benjamin Schulman. (Photo courtesy of the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts)**



### *University of Alaska Museum Expansion Responds to Needs of Community*

The University of Alaska Museum in Fairbanks is the primary repository of the state’s cultural and natural history, containing more than a million objects of art, archeology, and ethnology. The Museum’s particular emphasis is on research and education, using the collection to provide visitors a wealth of information on the great land to the north.

To serve even greater populations, the Museum is undergoing a massive expansion, doubling in size and enhancing its research and education programs. The expansion includes the creation of a new Research Center with state-of-the-art laboratories; a new Learning Center that includes a Pre-College Education Center, a “Smart Classroom” for university students, and an Art Study Room; and the Rose Berry Alaska Art Gallery, which will bring the Museum’s art treasures out of storage and into public view. Altogether, the expansion will give Alaskans and visitors to the state a deeper understanding of artistic creation, history, and geology in Alaska.

With support from an NEA Access grant, the Museum is involving the local community in the planning of the expansion. A community

advisory group was formed, including representatives from Alaska Native organizations, the Literacy Council, local schools, public libraries, university staff, and other community advisors. This group will work with Museum staff on developing the collection, education initiatives, research projects, and other aspects of the new expansion. By working with the community, the Museum is ensuring that it meets the needs of the local population.

**(Left) A computer rendering by GDM/HGA Rendering of the expanded University of Alaska Museum; the Rose Berry Alaska Art Gallery, the centerpiece of the expansion, will present the full range of Alaska’s artistic creations, from ancient ivory carvings to contemporary paintings. (Photo by Barry McWayne)**

**(Right) The University of Alaska Museum plan for the new Rose Berry Alaska Art Gallery is to feature Native American-made objects, like these moccasins and mukluks, side by side with pieces from the Museum’s Fine Arts collection to present the full range of Alaskan artistic creations. (Photo by Barry McWayne)**

## *Texas Arts Organization Creates Radio Program to Feature American Folk Artists*

Documentary Arts, based in Dallas, Texas, was founded in 1985 to broaden public knowledge and appreciation of American arts of different ethnic cultures through the use of film, video, and radio. One of the programs Documentary Arts developed was *Masters of Traditional Music*, a 52-part series that explored the complexity of American life, culture, and society by showcasing the talents of NEA National Heritage Fellowship recipients. Each five-minute segment features extraordinary performances and interviews with these master folk artists, and shares the talent and diversity of some of America's best artists working in traditional styles.

Musical styles highlighted in the series range from the blues of Mississippi and North Carolina to Hawaiian cowboys to Armenian oud players in the central valley of California. National Heritage Fellowship recipients featured include Kevin Locke, singing in the Lakota Sioux language and expressing the Plains Indian world view; Antonio de la Rosa, who is credited with shaping the current sound of Texan-Mexican *conjunto tejano* music by amplifying the sound and freeing up the button accordion to develop more individualistic stylistic nuances; Bua Xou Mua, a musician and spiritual leader of the Hmong, who performs tradi-

tional texts and melodies for sacred and secular celebrations; and Alexander H. Moore, the first African American in Texas to receive a National Heritage Award, displaying his improvisatory piano style that includes elements of blues, ragtime, stride, and boogie-woogie.

The series, supported by an NEA Access grant, has been broadcast on 150 radio stations across the country, and is currently available to stations interested in rebroadcast at no charge.

**1985 NEA National Heritage Fellowship recipient Bua Xou Mua, who performs sacred Hmong songs, is featured in Documentary Arts' *Masters of Traditional Music* radio series. (Photo courtesy of Documentary Arts)**



## HERITAGE & PRESERVATION

The NEA's Heritage & Preservation category embraces the twin concepts of preserving our nation's evolving, multicultural heritage and conserving important works of art that are products and symbols of this heritage. This category supports the presentation and conservation projects in both performing and visual arts. In FY 2000, 368 applications were received for Heritage & Preservation grants, of which 207 were funded. These projects represent 41 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa, with 71 having multistate impact.

### *Reviving Ballet West Founder Willam Christensen's 1950 Tribute to Vaudeville*

Willam Christensen, founder of Ballet West in Salt Lake City, Utah (as well as the Portland Ballet and San Francisco Ballet) and creator of the first university degree program in ballet in the United States, did not start out in ballet. Instead, he and his brothers Harold and Lew started their dancing careers on the vaudeville circuit. In 1950, Christensen celebrated his days in vaudeville with the ballet *Nothing Doing Bar*, set in a speakeasy in the 1920s and featuring the types of characters he had met in his travels, such as the drunk who fancies himself a ladies man, Weasel; the gangster Pay-off Mo; the party girl Fanny Flapper and her date, Joe College; Punchy the prizefighter; and the single woman, Shady Sadie.

With the support of an NEA Heritage & Preservation grant, Ballet West included a revival of *Nothing Doing Bar* in its 2000–01 season, staging the ballet with the same style of costumes and sets as the original premiere in San Francisco. Blending vaudeville skits with the precision of ballet choreography, Christensen created a work that required the company members to act as well as dance. Although the characters are archetypes, they require the dancers to accent and develop their roles in order for the light tone of the ballet to work. The revival of one of Christensen's more nostalgic works provides Ballet West the opportunity to pay fitting tribute to the man who created the company.

Ballet West's production of Willam Christensen's *Nothing Doing Bar*, featuring Donna Patzius as Shady Sadie, Jeff F. Herbig as Punchy, and Jeffrey Rogers as Weasel. (Photo by Quinn Farley)





**The group Blues Prodigy (back row: Sherika Hudson, Trent Calvin, Paula Thompson, and Travis Calvin. front row: Sarah Metcalf, Chenika Hudson, and Kristen Hines), made up of a group of graduates in 2000 from the Delta Blues Education Fund. (Photo by Panny Mayfield)**

### *Teaching Youth the Blues in Mississippi*

In Lambert, Mississippi, they are proving the old axiom wrong: as it turns out, the blues *can* be taught, and the Delta Blues Education Fund is doing the teaching. Under the tutelage of Johnnie “Mr. Johnnie” Billington, students enter an apprenticeship program, which includes classes, performances, and residencies by master Delta blues musicians. The classes take place after school and use no textbooks, instead relying on the oral tradition of instruction that has sustained blues music for generations. The students, usually nine to fourteen years old, learn to sing and play bass, lead guitar, drums, keyboards, harmonica, saxophone, and trumpet. Many of the students are impoverished and many of the instruments are borrowed, but Billington ensures that they learn important things that go beyond just music: discipline, self-esteem, and confidence. Billington does not allow fighting or cursing, and ensures that they learn how to work together by playing together. Just as important, they learn to carry on an important American musical tradition, one intri-

cately tied to the region in which they live. So far, there have been more than 30 graduates of the program, which is supported by an NEA Heritage & Preservation grant.

The Mississippi Delta region is the poorest in the United States, with poverty rates of more than 20 percent. It also has one of the richest traditions of blues music in the country, from Son House, Robert Johnson, and John Lee Hooker to R. L. Burnside, Big Jack Johnson, and Jessie Mae Hemphill. By teaching at-risk youth an important aspect of their culture, and instilling in them qualities that go beyond music, the Delta Blues Education Fund is providing these kids a framework for bettering their lives and increasing self-worth. An immediate benefit can be seen in family incomes: the young musicians are paid for their performances that the Fund sets up. The bigger benefit can be seen on the faces of the youth as they tear into another blues song.



### *COCA in St. Louis Pays Tribute to the Architecture of Eric Mendelsohn*

**The Center of Contemporary Art in St. Louis's exhibition, *Architect of Form and Spirit: Eric Mendelsohn*, featuring photographs and drawings of his work as well as educational and historical programs. (Photo by Ray Marklin)**

The Center of Contemporary Arts (COCA) in St. Louis, Missouri, had good cause to celebrate the architecture of Eric Mendelsohn: he designed the building in which the Center exhibits. Designed in 1946 as the B'nai Amoona Synagogue, Mendelsohn's first commission in the United States, the building was completed in 1950 and renovated in 1985, when it became the present home of COCA. The ideas he expressed in the design of the building radically changed thinking about religious architecture in contemporary society.

One of most widely imitated and prolific leaders of architectural modernism, Mendelsohn was one of the formulators of the basic principles of modern architecture in post-World War I Germany, as demonstrated by the Einstein tower in Potsdam. Mendelsohn did not rely on historical precedents in formulating his designs, instead deriving ideas from expres-

sionism and romantic symbolism. He fled Germany during Hitler's rise to power, eventually moving to the United States in 1941, where he established a successful practice.

The COCA exhibition on Mendelsohn, supported by an NEA Heritage & Preservation grant, presented original research on the synagogue; photographs and drawings of Mendelsohn's work; and educational programs on topics such as religious architecture in Weimar Germany, Mendelsohn's significance to the modern architectural movement, and the current adaptive re-use of the original synagogue space by COCA. In addition to the exhibit, COCA produced a catalogue of the architect's work with an essay by Kathleen James, a leading Mendelsohn scholar at the University of California at Berkeley.

## PLANNING & STABILIZATION

Through Planning & Stabilization grants, the Endowment supports the activities of national arts service organizations and local arts agencies in their provision of services to the arts field. Services funded by the NEA include assistance with strategic planning, new technology marketing, feasibility studies, and other activities that strengthen the capacity of arts providers to carry out their work. Funded projects help organizations and agencies assess their strengths and weaknesses in bringing the arts to communities throughout the country. The Endowment received 105 applications for Planning & Stabilization grants, of which 72 were funded in 24 states and the District of Columbia.

### *Broward County, Florida Looks at New Ways to Promote the Arts*

Broward County's Cultural Affairs Division partnered with the Broward Center for the Performing Arts to create a marketing campaign to expand radio, television, and Internet promotion of local arts organizations. By making it easier for the public to access information on and tickets to local arts and cultural events, the County hopes to enhance local arts organizations' ability to increase income. Supported by an NEA Planning & Stabilization grant, Broward County hired a professional advertising agency to assist local arts groups in developing and implementing a marketing plan for their events and programs.

In addition, a new Web site was created to promote arts events throughout the county, with a searchable calendar, recent art news (including art exhibitions, award ceremonies, research, and conferences), a cultural directory database searchable by discipline, and various artistic attractions throughout the county. The Web site allows visitors to find specific information on arts education, available grants, and public art and design in the county. Interactive features include a virtual art tour of the county's attractions, and access to *Cultural Quarterly*, the county's magazine about its cultural community. The Web site also allows online ticketing capacities, a crucial feature that will make it even easier for the public to attend local arts events.



The home page of the Broward County Cultural Affairs Office ([www.browardarts.net](http://www.browardarts.net)), which offers online ticketing, an events calendar, information about grants and arts education, and arts news.

## *National Arts Group Assists Community Arts Agencies in Central Appalachia*

American Festival Project—affiliated with the nonprofit media arts and cultural center Appalshop—used the support of an NEA Planning & Stabilization grant to arrange a conference to assist local arts agencies in remote Central Appalachia. Artists stayed with local hosts in southeastern Kentucky and southwestern Virginia for the four days of the conference, working with local leaders on strategic planning for arts activities that will help revitalize the communities.

The conference resulted in a proposal of a range of collaborative artistic events over the next five years. For example, in Elkhorn City, Kentucky, visual artists Suzanne Lacy and Susan

Liebovitz Steinman from Oakland, California, are working with the local community on a project encouraging the townspeople to make short biographical videos, which then will be shown on front porches during a celebratory promenade. In addition, they are examining the possibility of creating exhibits from the surrounding landscape, such as abandoned buses and materials pulled from the Russell Fork River, which winds through the town. The goal of the project is to help the small coal town look at itself in a different light.

This technique of immersing artists into local communities was duplicated in eastern Tennessee, with similar success. The project, known as the Knoxville American Festival Project and led by the Carpetbag Theatre, connected artistic expression with community issues in Knoxville with programs such as the Mobility Project, which involves community members and artists discussing public access for people with disabilities.

**Visiting artists Amira Haqq and Shannon Hummel listen as Evarts, Kentucky resident Danielle Burke (center) shows them a strip-mining site in Harlan County. Both artists stayed with Danielle and her family for a week during American Festival Project's Central Appalachia conference. (Photo by Nic Paget-Clarke)**



## ARTS ON RADIO AND TELEVISION

The NEA, throughout its history, has strived to make the excellence and diversity of the arts widely available to all Americans, and has been a major supporter of making the arts available through radio and television since the 1970s—reaching audiences in the millions. In FY 2000, the NEA reestablished a separate grant category to focus on those activities, Arts on Radio and Television. Investing \$3 million for 44 projects, the NEA supported the creation and presentation of 2,300 hours of arts programming, providing Americans in every state with access to art forms from folk music and Native American storytelling to cultural history and artist interviews. The 85 hours of television programming is estimated to have reached between 200 and 230 million viewers, with more than 2,200 hours of radio programs having reached 10 to 12 million listeners per week. More than half of those projects had specific plans for interactive Web sites, and several projects included educator's guides, companion books, and videos for use in home, schools, libraries, community groups, and arts organizations.

### *Radio Program Examines the 20th Century Through Sound*

Every Friday afternoon throughout 1999–2000, as part of National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, radio listeners heard sounds that they hadn't heard before. They were listening to *Lost and Found Sound*, a millennium radio series that chronicled, reflected, and celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> century through sound. Each segment of the program, created and produced by Davia Nelson and Nikki Silva (known as the Kitchen Sisters) with the support of an NEA Arts on Radio and Television grant, featured previously unheard recorded sounds, such as Thomas Edison's earliest sound recordings and recordings made by playwright Tennessee Williams in 1947 on cardboard acetate discs in New Orleans, as well as the sound of northern lights and the call of the loon. Historical events were captured in surprising ways, such as the uncovering of 60-year-old tapes that were made as part of a New Deal program to document in sound Dust Bowl refugees' migration to California from the Great Plains.

*Lost and Found Sound* also invited listeners to submit their own recordings to capture what ordinary Americans thought important to



(Logo courtesy of the Kitchen Sisters)

record and keep as part of the series' feature, *Quest for Sound*, curated by independent producer Jay Allison. Hundreds of listeners responded. These included a 1938 78 rpm recording of a person who, as a nine-year-old boy, watched Abraham Lincoln deliver the Gettysburg Address in 1863 and the reel-to-reel tape machine recordings of Lance Corporal Michael A. Baronowski from his 1967 tour of duty in the Vietnam War, from which he never returned.

To provide more access to the general public, an archive of the program was created on their Web site ([www.npr.org/programs/lfsound](http://www.npr.org/programs/lfsound)). Also, a compilation was made of the best of the *Lost and Found Sound* broadcasts, available on compact disc.

## *Television Series To Explore the Genesis of American Traditional Music*

America has long been considered the birthplace of many traditions of music: blues, jazz, country and western, Cajun and zydeco, Tex-Mex and Native American. Yet how did this diverse collection of musical styles all originate in one country? Ginger Group Productions, in collaboration with the New York Foundation for the Arts, is using an NEA Arts on Radio and Television grant to explore that question. *American Roots Music* is a four-part primetime television series, scheduled to air in 2001, which will examine the origins of American music during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The development of publishing, recording, broadcasting, and motion pic-

**The *American Roots Music* four-part television series, exploring how the many American musical traditions evolved, merged and transformed through the century, will use rare archival footage and new performances, such as this**

**one that includes Earl Scruggs (banjo), Ricky Skaggs (guitar), James Cotton (harmonica), and Marc (accordion) and Anne Savoy (guitar). (Photo courtesy of Ginger Group Productions).**

ture technology, and its effect on the creation and popularization of American music, will also be explored.

Some of the most important musicians who shaped American music will be featured, such as Jimmie Rodgers, Muddy Waters, Woody Guthrie, Mahalia Jackson, and Louis Armstrong, to name just a few. Rarely seen performance footage of these musicians will be included in the segments, as well as newly filmed performances by such luminaries as Doc Watson, Flaco Jimenez, Kitty Wells, Odetta, Bob Dylan, and B.B. King. The series will weave rare archival performance and documentary footage (some dating back as far as 1910), recordings, and photographs with newly created interviews with contemporary musicians like Bruce Springsteen and Steve Earle and music producers such as Marshall Chess and Sam Phillips.

*American Roots Music* will document the pertinent musical innovations of the last century, with each segment exploring a particular time period. The series as a whole will chronicle how the music genres evolved, merged, and transformed throughout the century, resulting in the rich tapestry of today's American music, from rhythm and blues to country, from rock to rap.

The series will be accompanied by a DVD boxed set, book, compact disc, and home video. In addition, a Web site is being developed to provide more access to the history of our nation's music. The series was developed through the collaborative efforts of the NEA, the New York Foundation for the Arts, Ginger Group Productions, the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, the Country Music Foundation, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

